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RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 0813
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA PRIORITY 3012
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 1454
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2333
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KATHMANDU 000082

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [NP](#)

SUBJECT: NEPAL: STUDENT LEADERS TRY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Classified By: CDA Nicholas J. Dean. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Summary

1. (C) Student leaders from four districts in western Nepal told Emboff during a driving tour from December 14-25, 2006 that they were ready for change in Nepal's political system. Students lamented the fact that they had no option outside of the mainstream political parties for having their voices heard; the mainstream political parties did not listen to them or take them seriously. Most students wanted a democratic republic in Nepal, and wanted the King out as soon as possible. The majority had personal stories to share about Maoist atrocities before the April 2006 cease-fire. All complained that the Maoist students had continued using violence and intimidation since the cease-fire.

Time for Change in Nepal's Politics

2. (C) Student leaders from the three major political parties -- Nepali Congress (NC), Nepali Congress-Democratic (NC-D), and the Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) -- told Emboff during a driving tour of western Nepal December 14-25, 2006 that now was the time for change in Nepal's political system. Students from Nepalgunj (Banke District), Gorahi and Tulsipur (Dang District), Birendranagar (Surkhet District) and Mangalsen (Achham District) all said that they wanted to create a new, more inclusive political system. Students said that their voices were not heard in the current system, and that there was no way for them, as youth, to enter into leadership positions in the parties. None of the students considered the formation of a new youth party to be realistic. All agreed that change could only come from within the existing party structures.

Parties Are Not Listening

3. (C) Students from all three parties stated that their local and central party leadership did not listen to them. Most of the students were convinced that they needed to engage in massive protests, throwing stones and burning tires, because that was the only way to get their party leadership in the government to pay attention. The students

expressed that they wanted their party leaders to stand up to the Maoists and "call them out" on their continuing violence and intimidation. The students said that their leaders were capitulating too often to Maoist demands. They were pleased with comments and statements from the U.S., and said they wished their party leaders would make similar statements.

Democratic Republic: No King

¶4. (C) Most students in the west were in favor of a democratic republic with no king. The NC student leaders in Surkhet (mid-western Nepal) said they did not want an autocratic king, but also did not want a "democratic republic," instead opting for a democracy with a ceremonial king. The CPN-UML and NC-D in Surkhet wanted a democratic republic, adding that their parties would not accept anything less. All student leaders had strong opinions about King Gyanendra. An NC leader in Gorahi stated that Gyanendra had done terrible things to the students and the parties during the April 2006 People's Movement, and that the political parties and the general public would never forgive him.

Maoists Atrocities Fresh in the Minds of Students

¶5. (C) Three student leaders in the west told Emboff that the Maoists had killed their fathers. Almost everyone knew someone, a colleague or family member, who had been killed during the decade-long Maoist insurgency. One NC student leader in Dang told Emboff that the Maoists had killed his father in February. Recently, he had participated in a

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meeting of the student leaders of all eight parties on his university campus. During the meeting, the NC student began to speak negatively about the Maoists, calling on them to take responsibility for their actions. The Maoist student leader told the NC leader, "you shouldn't say things like that about us, remember what we did to your father."

Maoists Continue to Use Violence and Intimidation

¶6. (C) All the students told similar stories about continuing Maoist violence and intimidation. One CPN-UML student leader in Dang told Emboff that the student wings of the parties were able to work in the countryside, as long as they followed the rules set out by the Maoists. An NC-D student leader in Nepalgunj said the students could do whatever they wanted in the district headquarters, but in the rural campuses, the Maoists were in control.

Comment

¶7. (C) Student leaders across the country are smart and ready to start working to make a difference in their country. Many of them feel that they are being held down by the party leadership and look to their national student leaders to help them have a voice. Many of the students were hoping for answers from Emboff during his trip, constantly asking, "what do you think we should do?" Emboff encouraged the students to take an active role in the creation of their new democracy. Post will continue to push central party leaders to listen to and include student leaders in deliberations on Nepal's future.

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